



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

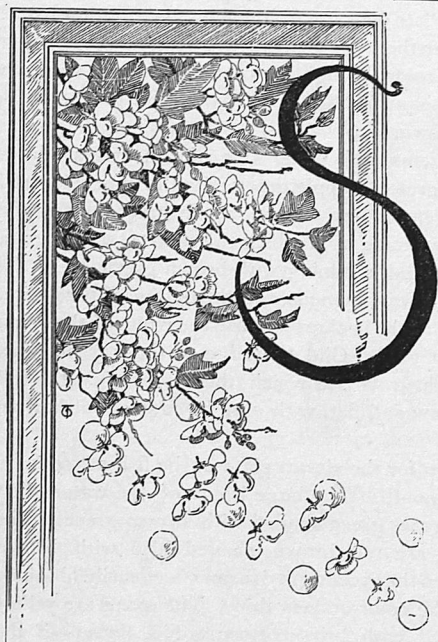
We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

# THE HOUSE

HOME DECORATION AND FURNITURE.



VI.

SUMMER heats make every one look longingly for surroundings that shall produce a sense, at least, of coolness. Of course one is really not a whit cooler for the cretonne slips on the furniture, but the impression produced upon the mind is such that we believe we are living in a lower temperature than we would if heavy tapestries covered our doorways and rugs adorned our floors.

It is, however, not essential that our rooms be made to look like the abode of ghosts; that the white-robed sofas and chairs which we so often see set upon a white linen-covered carpet, and against pallid walls, hung with equally pale shrouded pictures, can be replaced, at no greater cost, by more attractive and sightly material, which, at the same time, will give us an appearance of cool and refreshing surroundings.

For many years the cretonnes and chintzes that were really attractive in design and coloring were not to be bought at a modest figure, but there are now in the market equally pleasing coverings that have the added advantage of being quite inexpensive. These are much to be commended, because color is a most agreeable addition to any apartment, and if quiet, subdued and cool tones are selected the summer fittings of our rooms will be as consistent as the winter's heavier coverings.

The best floor-covering that I know of for summer use is India or Chinese matting. I have spoken of this material before as one that can be used most decoratively, but if it be stretched over the entire floor and covered again here and there with a cotton rug the general effect is charming. A word must be said first about mattings and later about cotton rugs. Mattings are now brought to this market in great variety, and if we need not stop to consider the expense of a constant renewal, we may purchase any of the patterns that seem to suit our fancy. But for those who wish to obtain durability as well as decorative beauty in their floor-covering, let me say that a great many of the mattings which are charming when first laid are a snare and a delusion, as we find to our sorrow after a few weeks' wear. A matting that has a short woof, so to speak, and stout threads for the warp, wears best. If the grass or straw has a long exposure before it is held down by the warp, it is apt to be easily torn and broken. The coloring matter is always foreign, and is simply stained upon the surface of the straw, so that large grounds of red or green soon become rusty, and their beauty is gone by the wearing off of the color. Hence, the white or straw-colored matting, or that matting which has a few threads of colored straw only, is the best to purchase.

The cotton rugs spoken of above are a great addition to the summer fittings of all houses—city or country. They are made on the same principle as the woollen ones, woven with a rough nap and in colors. They are, however, all cotton, except, perhaps, the warp, and are made in many patterns in blues, grays, browns and white. And, on the whole, I know of no mats that are better or prettier than these for the use of which I speak. I believe they are imported from China, and they are quite inexpensive, costing but a few dollars for a pretty good-sized mat, such, for instance, as one would use alongside of a bed or sofa.

Should you have a deep-seated objection to stuff rugs of any sort for the summer, it is possible to replace the winter collection by those made of the same straw matting already referred to. These are made in various sizes, with borders, centres and with patterns quite after the manner of rugs, and they are cool, effective, and, for summer use, sufficiently durable.

Mattings used in this way have much to recommend them. They are light, and can

easily be rolled up and cleaned. They are cool-looking and comfortable. Should they become soiled in any way they can be washed, as one would wash a floor, with soap and water. This is applicable to floors entirely covered as well as to the smaller mats.

Unglazed pictures, especially valuable ones, should be covered with some kind of gauze to protect them from the dust and flies during the summer months. But there is no reason why it should be stretched on plain and flat over the frame, or should be of a material so thick as to exclude a view of the picture behind. In point of fact, it is injurious to a picture to be in absolute darkness for several months of the year. It is necessary that the picture be carefully veiled, if it is attempted at all; but this veil may be surrounded by a little more of the same material laid in a few folds over the frame, or simply across the corners.

In New York City—and I suppose the same is true of other places—it is becoming the custom to "decorate" the ready-made houses which are offered for sale by the speculative builder. But I can hardly believe that the average tenant craves quite so

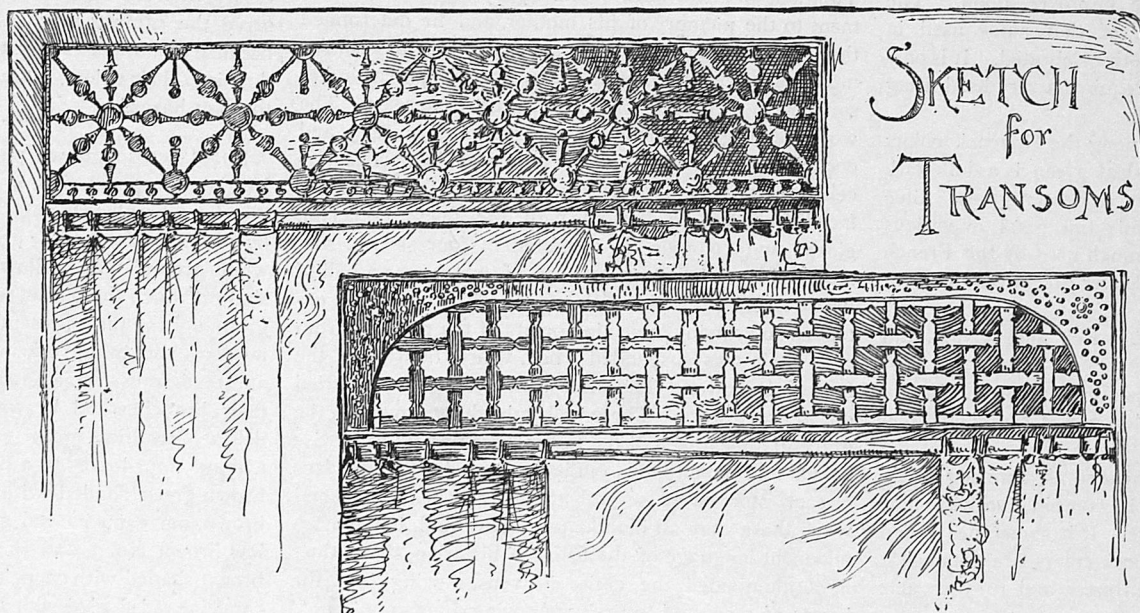
much startling color and showy ornament as he finds provided for him by the stock trade decorator. The truth is, that a great part of the people never give a thought to the matter, and accept without question the builder's taste, which naturally is influenced more by the price than by the artistic qualities of his decorative materials, whatever they may be. They find afterward that their dining-room is gloomy, on the whole, the wall-paper has a depressing effect, or that the sitting-room—with three south windows, perhaps—is not such a cheerful apartment as they wished it to be, and that the colors of the

paper do not harmonize with the wood-work or the ceiling. The library does not furnish well. The pattern on the walls is such that the pictures lose their effect, and altogether the owners or tenants are disappointed with the house that seemed so attractive when they bought or rented it.

The inconsistency of this kind of thing is apparent. The people whose lives are



RECESSED CHINA CABINET FOR DINING-ROOM.





spent within the walls of a house should have some choice in the selection of their surroundings. Even if they are not art critics they will probably have some preference for a certain color, or set of colors, a particular style or class of work, or even certain flower forms the introduction of which would be pleasant. People really have preferences if they think about it, and are not afraid to express them. If you cannot distinguish between the honest workman, who wishes to profit by your suggestion to give you what you desire, and the other sort, who is anxious to profit—but in another way—by your apathy or ignorance, you will almost always be deceived. Even though the paper-hanger and the upholsterer insist that certain articles are the style of to-day, and that others are old—of yesterday's mode—one should not be fearful of offending these gentlemen by asserting one's preference, and obtaining eventually, even if it be at the cost of words and time, a something that shall approach one's idea.

fashion, why should you not have some other sort of room, if you prefer it?

The living-room, sitting-room, library, study, den—whatever it be called, should of all places be congenial, and hold out a welcome to the occupants. While general rules may be given, personal taste must be consulted with every detail.

Perhaps it seems that I am laying down generalities, and not giving any ideas to be practically worked out, but I believe if you will take the illustrations with the points I have made, you will see what I mean by home comforts.

Take the large one, with the deep bay and the book-cases. As I have said before of other illustrations, so of this, every detail can be simplified, and the whole reduced in expense, which, in the present instance, is not inconsiderable.

Before closing, I wish to add a word upon a topic that was left unfinished in my last paper—on the use of

it will be sufficient to enable one who has never tried such work to undertake it. It requires skill and an artistic sense of light and shade, to bring out the salient points of a design which, at first glance, seems almost equally interesting.

This same effect may be accomplished more rapidly and quite as effectively by the use of oil paint. The paint should be used as dry as possible and without any oil or turpentine. With the material well stretched on a frame or tacked in place, and in much the same light that it will finally occupy, let the artist touch up the high lights, and, if desired, add deep tones for shade, and, in short, bring out the design in any way that his sense or fancy may direct. The colors to be employed in such work depend very much upon the position that it will occupy, and whether it will be viewed by daylight or gas-light.

This last consideration—gas-light—is one sometimes overlooked in decoration generally. The yellow color



BAY WINDOW AND BOOK-CASES IN SITTING-ROOM.

In a house of moderate size let comfort and common sense be the first and last consideration, and I believe that in adhering to this line of action the house thus formed will be more artistic than if art is worshipped at the expense of personal ease. We all remember the man whom Pope mentions, who was "Proud to catch cold at a Venetian door," but in this practical country I doubt that he would have many followers. Speaking of Pope reminds me of his criticism of the house of the Duke of Marlborough:

I find by all you have been telling  
That 'tis a house and not a dwelling.

That is the point. A dwelling—a home. Let your house be your own property not alone in the sense of proprietorship, but in the fact that it reflects in its decorative elements the personalities of the inmates. I believe I have said this several times already in these papers, but the truth cannot be brought home too often. Let me ask, for example, why we must all have white and gold parlors? We cannot all prefer them, and even, if it is the

embroidery and painting to supplement the decorative qualities of materials supplied by the manufacturers. Any stuff, whether silk, wool or cotton, that has a good design covering the surface pretty evenly, is a sufficiently worthy ground upon which to work.

The pattern may be outlined with a fine line of bright yellow silk. This is better than the gold thread that the shops now afford which is but a poor substitute for the genuine.

After the pattern has been outlined with the yellow silk, a second design is embroidered over the woven design of the material. If this is done in some strong contrasting color, and with a bold, free style of needlework, the effect will be very charming. If, on the other hand, a delicate effect is desirable and a suggestion of elaboration can only be given to the material, the embroidery should be put on to touch up the high lights of the design, and to bring out certain elements that would otherwise be, in a measure, lost.

This is a somewhat brief statement, but I trust that

of the gas has a marked effect upon almost all colors. It subdues the yellows and browns, makes certain blues gray, other blues green, intensifies all reds, and entirely changes such colors as violet, or pink, or purple. But, bearing this point in mind, it is not difficult to so select the shades of color that the finished work will look as well by gas-light as by daylight, although the balance of color will undoubtedly be somewhat altered by the introduction of the yellow tone of the gas.

ARCHITECT.

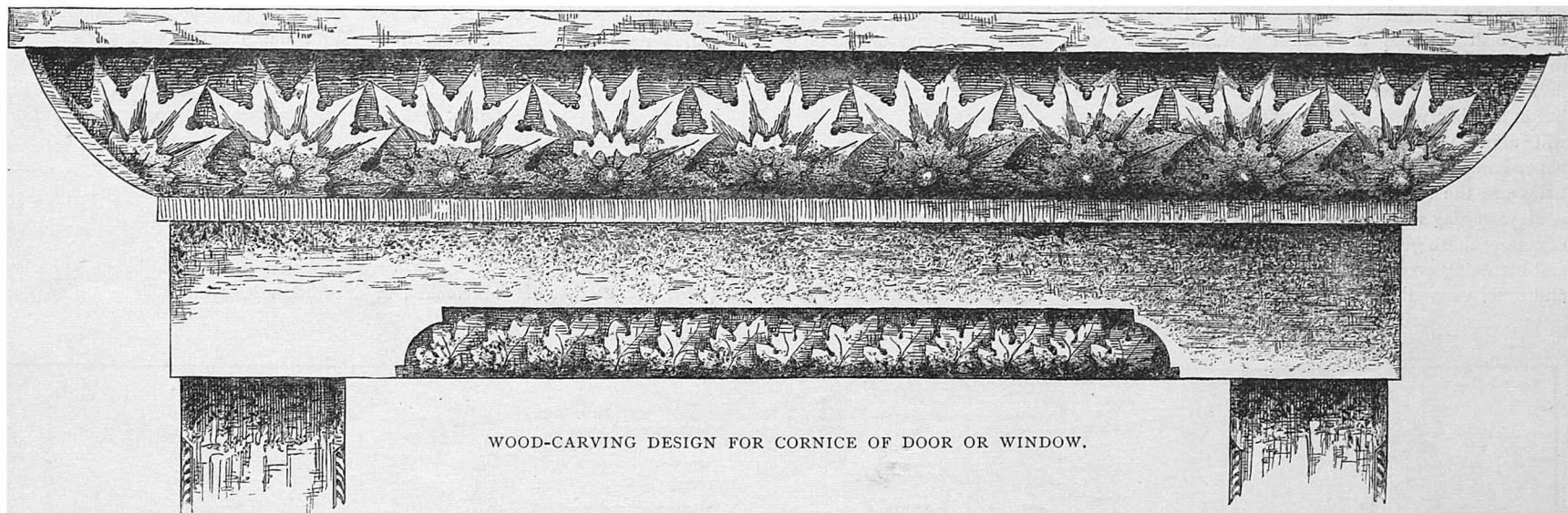
THE London correspondent of the Sheffield Daily Telegraph says: "These are bad times, are they not? The proof, let me mention, is an incident which I recently witnessed at Christie's famous salesrooms. A set of ten large carved and gilt arm-chairs, with a sofa en suite, was put up for sale, the backs and seats covered with French tapestry. The tapestry was old—very old. It was dirty, worn, frayed and faded; the gilt was almost gone from the arms and backs; one arm to one

chair was smashed. Most people would have said £2 or £3 a chair and £10 for the sofa were liberal prices. Imagine my surprise, therefore, when the first bid was 50 guineas. Imagine pretty nearly everybody's surprise in the room when these eleven ancient pieces of furniture were quickly run up to 400 guineas. To make a

and this was anything but pleasant, and far from being an equivalent for their cost. There was not the slightest attempt at decoration on either doors or casings, beyond unmeaning, machine-made mouldings; not a leaf, bud, or blossom, or anything suggestive of life, light, or beauty, answered the inquiring eye; nothing to

making the lower panels large and the upper ones small. Decoratively, this is important, as it makes the upper panels available for high-relief carving, while the lower ones, which are more exposed to rough usage, may be left plain or decorated with surface designs.

The frame-work around a door or window, usually



WOOD-CARVING DESIGN FOR CORNICE OF DOOR OR WINDOW.

long story short, they were knocked down to a dealer (Mr. Duveen) for 1400 guineas, after keen competition with another dealer (Wertheimer) and a lady who kept pace with them for some time, but was outbid at last. These chairs and sofa belonged to the late Admiral Tucker, of Trematon Castle, Cornwall. There was a round of applause when the hammer fell. I doubt whether such a price has ever been paid for ten chairs and a sofa in such a condition, especially as it was said that to repair and restore them would not cost much short of £400." This guileless correspondent evidently does not know that it would pay Mr. Duveen very well to expend £400 in repairing and restoring "these eleven ancient pieces of furniture"—probably fine examples of Louis Quinze or Louis Seize—which he will make look "as good as new," and sell easily for 3000 guineas.

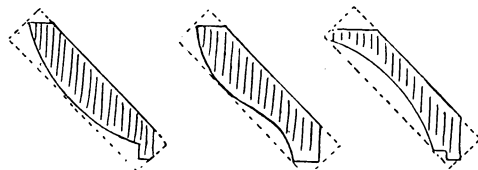
## PRACTICAL WOOD-CARVING AND DESIGNING.

### VIII.

THERE are certain features of the wood-work of a room that admit of rich and effective treatment, but which, as a rule, are allowed to remain as expressionless as when the wood left the carpenter's bench. Foremost are the doors and the casings that form the frame-work of doors and windows. Machine-made mouldings, which may be used to relieve the absolute plainness of the framed panelling and casing, do not count as decoration; they mean nothing, and add neither beauty nor strength to the construction. I remember a house of

invite a second look, and beyond the bare utility of closing the entrance to a room, these doors seemed only to say, "We are the costly products of a *machine*—nothing more." So fine an opportunity as is presented of adding to the interest of a room by the decoration of the panels of the doors, and the surrounding frame-work of both doors and windows, should certainly be embraced by those who have the skill to attain or the taste to appreciate what is desirable and beautiful.

In the construction of doors of moderate dimensions,

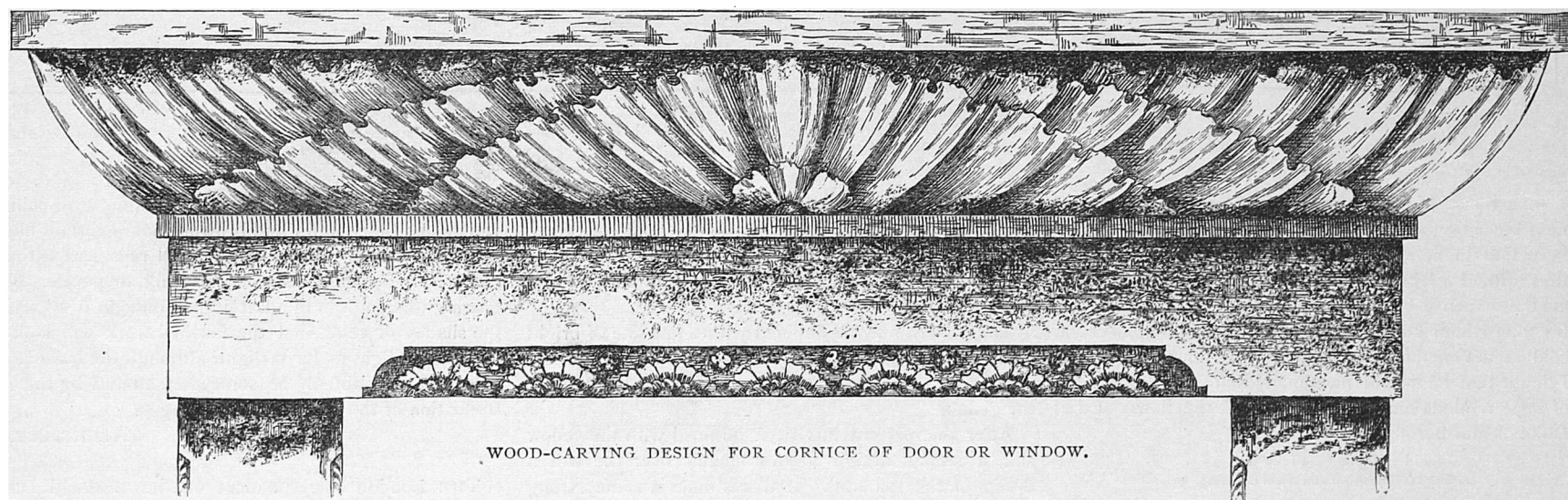


SECTIONS OF CORNICE MOULDINGS.

containing four panels, it has been customary to make the lower panels small, and the upper ones much larger. When a door consisted of a framing of six panels, the upper and lower panels were small, and the larger occupied the centre. There was a reason for this construction in former times, when the middle rail of the door was placed at a convenient height for the insertion of a mortise lock, with its handle for opening and closing the door. The lock used to be made so much larger than now that the *rail* was necessary for

termed its casing, consists, in the case of a door, of uprights or styles, supporting more or less of a cornice, or projecting moulding, placed over a fascia or face-board. If the lower edge of the fascia be chamfered, as it should be, with a bevelled or rounded edge, and decorated, the cornice, with its fascia, gives a triple line of decoration, corresponding to the entablature of classic architecture, with its architrave, frieze and cornice. This will be apparent, at a glance, by referring to the accompanying illustrations of door-cornices. Without inquiring into the reasons why these traditional forms are considered beautiful, it is well for the amateur to know that he is not running counter to, but rather respecting, the art traditions of a great period in so decorating his interiors two thousand years and more after it was decided what, in the treatment of the details under consideration, was the fitting thing to do. The study of these constructive features is of special interest to the amateur, first, because it will probably result in some striking interior decoration, and, secondly, because the incident decoration is work which can be done by those having but limited skill in carving. The door-panels call for more elaborate treatment, but that I leave for future consideration, contenting myself now with pointing out the most suitable decoration for the surrounding frame-work.

The treatment of the uprights of the door-casing should be more or less elaborate, according to the size and projection of the cornice. If the cornice is to carry a bric-à-brac shelf—which should not be less than ten inches in width—it will need supporting brackets, forming



WOOD-CARVING DESIGN FOR CORNICE OF DOOR OR WINDOW.

considerable extent and pretension, the doors of the principal floor of which were of solid rosewood, and cost five hundred dollars each, it was said. They were strong and solid, which was good; but they were stolid and meaningless, and had no expression beyond giving privacy and a jail-like security to the rooms they enclosed,

its insertion. At the present time, door-locks, and especially those of the best make, are so small as to be readily and safely mortised into the style, at any point desired. As there is, therefore, no constructive necessity for a lower rail at the required height for a door-handle, a more satisfactory effect, it seems to me, is gained by

capitals to the styles. The style, terminating at the foot in a plinth, corresponds to the base, shaft and capital of a column, which, when thus flattened, becomes a pilaster. The cornices illustrated herewith carry but a narrow shelf, and supporting brackets can be dispensed with.

The styles of the upright casing of a door admit of



very varied treatment. They should be more or less conventional, and the design should always be subordinate to that on the brackets, cornice and panels. The carving may be surface or incised work; it should never be in relief, as it occupies a position where it would be likely to catch the dresses of women, and itself be exposed to injury. Celtic and Moorish designs show to admirable advantage in these positions. The example of the latter, which is given herewith, and which I have used, is from the Alhambra. An appropriate Celtic design was given in *The Art Amateur* for July (page 35); it should, of course, be enlarged to the width of the casing. When the casing is to be enriched with carving, whether surface or incised work, it must be polished before the decoration is begun.

An example of double doors, with appropriate carved casings, is given herewith. They occupy a position where, under ordinary circumstances, the upper panels would be leaded with opalescent glass to correspond with the windows of the room; but the apertures command a view of a wooded hill, with a stately mansion at the summit, and, as it was desirable to preserve this picture, the lights consist wholly of clear plate-glass, except the small jewels, and a narrow, three-quarter-inch band of streaked ruby round the centre bevelled square. The effect is quiet but rich, and the view is not seriously interrupted.

The cornices illustrated are convex on the surface. Other available forms would be an ogee and a hollow-round, as shown in the accompanying illustration. BENN PITMAN.

IN the course of a recent sale at Christie's of objects of art, a pair of Louis XVI. candelabra with ormolu branches of three lights, supported by torches and with bronze seated figures of Cupid and Psyche on dove-colored marble pedestals, with friezes of cupids in chased ormolu (sold by order of the executors of the late Mr. Beresford-Hope, M.P.), were, after a smart competition, knocked down to Eugene Benjamin, the dealer of Bond Street, for 660 guineas.

A BOX in gold and enamel of the time of Louis XV., decorated with miniatures of military subjects, at a late Paris sale brought 7300 fcs. Another box in chased gold, at a sale at the Hôtel Drouot, brought 650 fcs. It was decorated with the arms of the city of Paris, and was a municipal gift for services rendered in 1815.

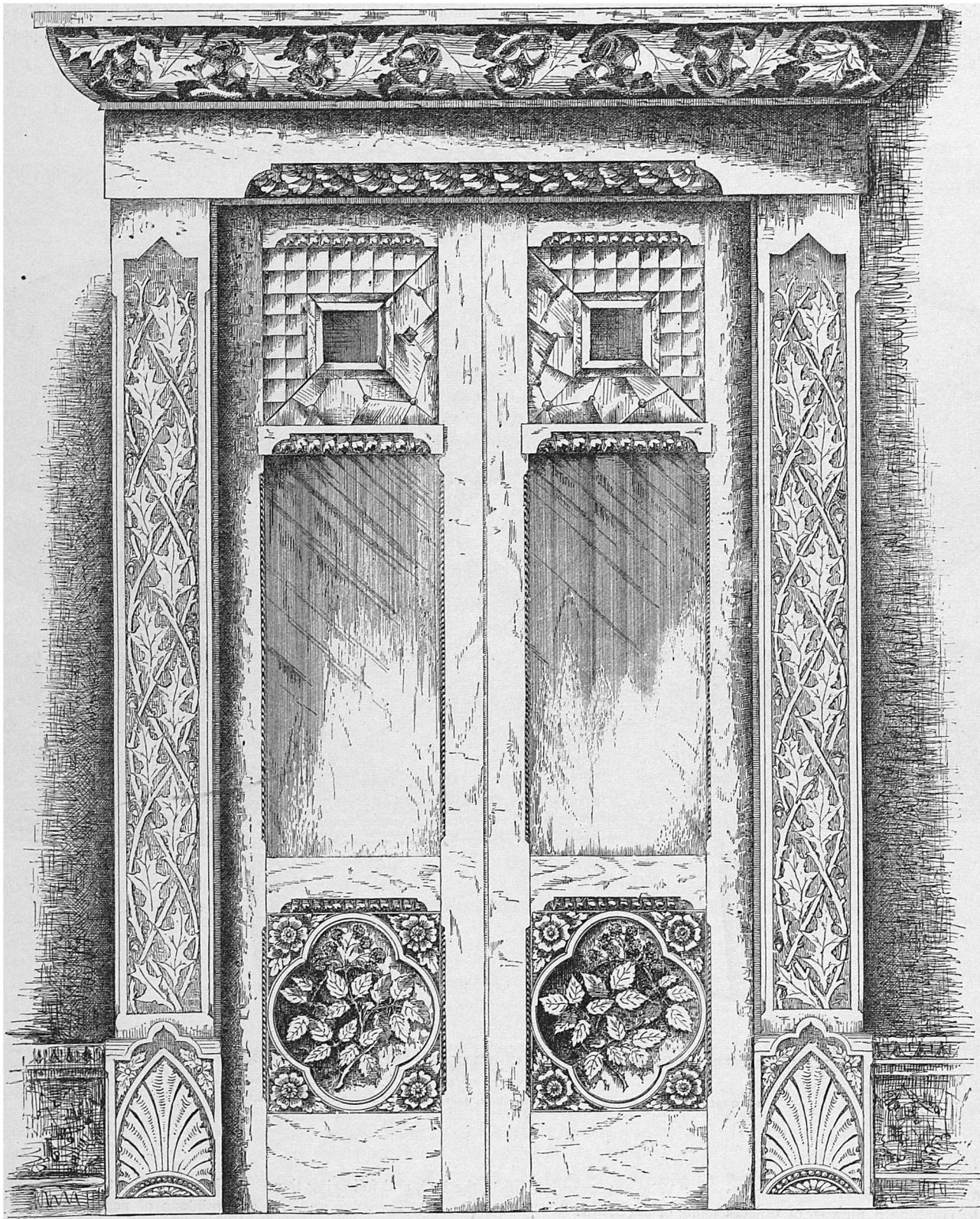
## TALKS WITH DECORATORS.

MR. E. W. BLASHFIELD ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF ROOMS.

"OUR American tendency to fill the home with beautiful things rather than to make the house itself a work of art is, I find, the chief obstacle to any noble decorative work," said Mr. Blashfield. "This is partly the fault of circumstance," he added; "our household gods must keep their sandals strapped and ready to move on the first of May. In a country where commercial ends are paramount everything must yield to business. When a man buys a house he expects to sell it again as soon as

such objects as were to meet their eyes daily. We have also the example of the Japanese, who have influenced in such large measure our taste in decoration. Nothing can be more simple than a Japanese interior. A vase perfect in form and color, a fine old bronze, is placed where it may receive all the homage that is its due. Then some other beautiful object takes its place. That is real appreciation, and you will admit a very different thing from crowding a cabinet with Japanese jars, however pretty they may be. If a man wishes to make a museum of his house, that is another thing—epochs, periods, styles, may jostle and confound one another. But if he wants to decorate and beautify his home, then

he is on the wrong road. The adjustment of our surroundings should contribute to mental repose. You know what a feeling of unrest a floor littered with bits of paper gives; you cannot work until it is cleared up. In the same way, if less obviously, the confusion and incoherence of arrangement of our homes acts on the nerves. One's attention is distracted by a multiplicity of objects clamoring for notice. Concentration of thought, even for the purposes of conversation, is more or less difficult amid such surroundings. A room should possess unity as well as character—that is to say, it should have some definite purpose or style, and everything should tend to further this. It may be composed as an easel picture is composed; with regard to masses, groups, color, line, and lighting. How easily can an artist fritter away and dissipate the unity of his painting by bestrewn it with objects! Instead of doing this, he gathers them into masses, and then disposes of his groups with reference to one



INTERIOR VIEW OF CARVED WOODEN DOUBLE OUTER DOORS.

commerce invades his block. Naturally his goods must be movable. Then there is our love of rich profusion, costly possessions brought together without any remoter purpose. We are suffering from bric-à-brac indigestion. In all fine epochs there was but little furniture in use. The Italians of the Renaissance, for example, used it sparingly in their homes, but each piece introduced was a work of art. Even common things had beautiful forms. That is what we want."

"But the homes of the Italians of the Renaissance were such works of art as you lament we lack—being, in this country, as yet under the ban of circumstances."

"Yes, but we could imitate to advantage the old Italians in their moderation and in their judicious choice of

another. He may be guided in these by consideration for line or for color. The most important he sets forth, the others fall into subordinate places.

"Take my studio, for example. I have a good many sketches that it would be convenient for me to hang on the walls. But they would interfere with my fine large tapestries, so I keep them out of the way. One of these, a fourteenth-century piece, I have hung in the most conspicuous place, which is its due. An odd collection of lutes and mandolins, fine in tone, I bring together in a pendent group between the tapestries. Below another tapestry I place an old Italian carved rest. I had three panoplies of armor hung here, but removed them because I thought it a pity to break

up the effect of the tapestries by using them as a background."

"You often see that done."

"Yes, but is it not a pity? In the old time tapestries were regarded as a decoration whose beauty needed no enhancement."

"To continue: an easel picture furnishes another bit of decoration in the corner. Instead of tapestry a large bookcase, subdivided into panels, fills a third large wall space. On the top of the bookcase I have collected all my small articles—vases, antique glass, statuettes, jars. Here they, of course, lose in individual value, but they enter into the general decorative scheme, and they can always be examined in detail if one chooses. In any arrangement with reference to masses that reposeful effect of which I spoke is aided. The artistic value and the costliness of the various objects combined do not affect the general principle. If one has a really fine thing

milieu. A studio, too, gets a certain reputation through that reaction from the commonplace which people accustomed to it are apt to have. The principle of arrangement is just as applicable to private rooms.

"Above all, let us have sobriety. We have spoken of the reposeful effect of spaces and masses. It is often desirable to take the choicest object in a room and make it the key to the whole. One should not take a warm-toned painting of an Oriental scene and place it conspicuously in a cold gray room. But if with that for the note of color, draperies and surroundings take the hint, the room might be like a burst of sunlight. Such treatment would exalt the dignity of the painting. As a general thing warm-hued paintings should be kept together and those of another key grouped by themselves. Etchings and engravings can seldom be hung in the same room with oil paintings."

whole matter is in an elementary state. Beyond a few very general suggestions advice can't go. But in time it seems that a feeling of what is fit and best must come from intelligent effort to produce harmonious arrangements."

M. G. H.

## The Needle.

EMBROIDERY IN AMERICA.

VIII.—SOME SUGGESTIONS BY MRS. WHEELER ABOUT BED LINEN AND COVERLETS.

"THE disappearance of the pillow-sham has been swift and irrevocable," said Mrs. Wheeler.

"The fact that it still displays its monogram over a vast extent of country, I suppose, does not count to the contrary?"



LATE LOUIS QUINZE SOFA COVERED WITH GOBELIN TAPESTRY, AFTER DESIGNS BY BOUCHER.

FORMERLY IN THE PALACE OF FONTAINEBLEAU, AND LATER IN THE DOUBLE COLLECTION.

some sacrifices ought to be made to lend importance to it. It is also possible to combine a number of objects so they will serve as the background for some single prominent object, just as on the stage a well-organized and properly clothed mob in Booth and Barrett's performance of "Julius Cæsar" makes a magnificent background for the principals.

"The human interest should always be first—the four walls should be the background for the individual. One can readily see or feel on entering a room whether this is so or not. It is not in any room in which free movement is impossible without imperiling the bric-à-brac."

"A studio seems to have something of an advantage over the more commonplace house in its opportunities for artistic arrangement?"

"Not necessarily. It appears to have because the artist by virtue of his profession acquires a sort of instinctive skill in preparing for himself an artistic

"Why not arrange them in the hall, and following the line of the stairs?"

"Admirable! Since the fireside in most houses has lost its place the table forms the centre of family reunions. That seems to make the dining-room an eminently fit place for family portraits."

"It is a great mistake to suppose that space exists only to be occupied. On the contrary, it is often, as well as beauty, its own excuse for being. But a mantel-shelf is one of the spaces that should be occupied, and only see what havoc is wrought. I saw to-day in a fine house two large Canton jars flanking a bust of highly polished bronze, which threw off so many high lights you could not see it. Between these were a home-painted plaque, a framed photograph, some carved ivory, and behind them all a row of Easter cards. Everything else was fluttering with silk scarfs."

"I doubt very much if the people who live in the presence of such things perceive the incongruity. The

"No more than that although this month there are two millions of people in town, everybody may be said to be out of town. In each case we state an intelligible fact. The pillow-sham is no more. It was too bare-faced a fraud for long sufferance. The very name showed that it gloried in its shame."

"But with it has gone a field for acres of embroidery?"

"No, the field is there, but it is reserved for finer tillage. It is the fashion now for the pillows to be withdrawn, and the bed-cover, which overlays the whole surface from the head-board to the foot, must be a thing of beauty."

"Is no embroidery permissible on the bed linen?"

"Oh, yes. The initial which marks it may be as handsomely wrought as one desires. It may even be in color to accord with the prevailing tint of the decorations. Drawn-work below the hem of the sheet is now generally introduced. The initial is added below it, and makes both a pretty and reasonable decoration. We are re-